

House Republican Press Release

June 7, 2005
Press Office: 860-240-8700

DelGobbo Says: Majority Legislators Tell People of the State, “Drop Dead on Constitutional Spending Cap”



DelGobbo Says Legislative Democrats Are Engaged in “Tyranny of the Majority”

HARTFORD—State Representative Kevin M. DelGobbo (R-70th, Naugatuck) today criticized the state legislative majority in the strongest terms for disregarding the constitutional state-spending cap for a second time in two days.

Following adoption of a \$31-billion budget that exceeds the spending cap Monday night, Rep. DelGobbo blasted the Democratic majority leadership Tuesday for again disregarding the spending cap by imposing a new \$30 fee on the filing of real estate documents.

“This is nothing less than the tyranny of the majority,” said Rep. DelGobbo in debate on the House floor. “This is like spitting in the face of the 80 percent of Connecticut voters who directed the legislature to adopt a constitutional spending cap to protect against runaway spending and taxes.”

In one of his most passionate speeches during his time in the legislature, he said, “This is a violation of the oath that every legislator took to uphold the constitution. This vote undermines the authority of the legislature to act on behalf of the people.”

He added, “The legislature did this today because they could. They believed most people would not pay any attention. But that does not make it right.

Rep. DelGobbo stated, “This is one of the darkest days in Connecticut government history.”

“This is the most outrageous act I have witnessed since I have been in the legislature. It is a complete violation of any protection that the spending cap was intended to provide, if the legislature can ignore the spending cap simply by whim.”

Rep. DelGobbo is one of the leading legislators trying to preserve the spending cap as one last vestige of protection for Connecticut taxpayers. Eighty one percent of statewide voters in 1992 approved a referendum adopting a constitutional amendment to impose the

spending cap. The legislature, however, has never formally adopted the spending cap into law.

The issue exploded Tuesday June 7, on the next to last day of the 2005 session. Though the state House of Representatives had already adopted the state budget the night before, the state House of Representatives debated another measure, SB 410, to collect a new \$30 fee with each real estate filing to be used for land preservation, land protection, affordable housing and historic preservation.

The fee is estimated to collect \$27 million in Fiscal Year 2006 and \$27.75 million in Fiscal Year 2007. Some \$44 million will be divided among four state agencies for program funding and staff.

Republicans noted that none of the spending under the bill was included in the budget adopted Monday and that the amount of the dollars would exceed the “revised” spending cap under the budget. The Democrat majority ruled that the millions of dollars involved did not count under the cap, because it was “distributed” to the agencies and not “appropriated.”

“Clearly, the state is collecting and spending money, but somehow it doesn’t count under the spending cap. This defies common sense and defies the directives of the voters and the constitution.”

Rep. DelGobbo concluded, “If the legislature can disregard the constitutional spending cap, it could just as easily violate the constitutional protection of freedom of speech or freedom of religion.”

He added, “The legislative majority has twice in two days trampled on the wishes of the people and said, ‘Voters of Connecticut, drop dead.’ Your 80 percent vote meant nothing to a legislature hell bent on finding new ways to raise and spend your hard-earned money.”